

## FACT SHEET — Hearing Aid Coverage in Nebraska

**NeHAC: A grassroots voice for people with hearing loss.**

### States already with hearing aid coverage plans in place:

- Connecticut
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- **Minnesota**
- **Missouri**
- **Oklahoma**
- Rhode Island

### States recently drafting legislation to promote hearing:

- California
- Illinois
- Massachusetts
- New York
- Virginia
- Washington
- And more are coming ...

## *Sounds Good to the Ear:*

*Hearing aids help people learn, work, and maintain healthier families.*

### ISSUE: Incentives to 'Help Themselves' vs. 'Paying For It' Later

Hearing loss is a vital health issue.

Treating it can **DOUBLE** an individual's earning power.

For every \$1 spent to rehabilitate a disabled person for employment, \$10 more return to our economy.

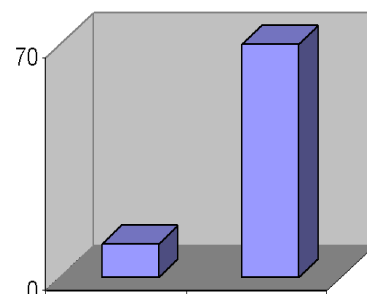
Treating hearing loss enhances emotional/mental stability, improves health —

with less incidents of pain, and fewer hospital stays.

Unfortunately, 1/3 of Nebraskans can't afford hearing aids.

Untreated hearing loss leads to isolation, risk for social problems, such as chemical dependency, higher insurance cost, and lost income.

#### Hearing Affects Learning



US Dept of Ed: 30% of students (K-6) have mild hearing loss. 70% of those become academically deficient in at least one subject by grade-6.

### COST: Untreated Hearing Loss Burdens Everyone

#### CHILDREN:

- \$420,000 extra cost to schools without early intervention for a child with hearing loss
- \$1 million in extra costs over a lifetime without treatment for hearing loss (i.e. special education, lost wages, health complications, etc.)
- Learning frustration leads to isolation/lower graduation rates

#### ADULTS:

- 50-70% less income received for workers with untreated hearing loss (vs. full-hearing peers)
- \$56 billion in costs/losses nation-wide for lost productivity, medical care related to hearing loss
- Noise-induced hearing ranks No. 2 among self-reported occupational injuries
- Higher risk for chemical dependency, increasing social costs

#### SENIORS:

- More medical visits/more hospital stays, increasing cost to Medicare, other health programs
- Loss of independence, social isolation, more safety issues

### NEBRASKA by the NUMBERS: Need for hearing aid assistance exists today

\$1,000 to \$3,000 — Typical cost per hearing aid

176,400 — Nebraskans who are hard of hearing (2003)

1,200 — Annual unit sales of hearing devices in Nebraska

35% — Population ages 18-64 with hearing impairment

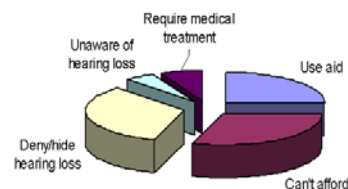
50% — Population ages 75+ with hearing impairment

No. 3 — Most treatable issue for seniors (Arthritis, Hypertension)

40% — Hearing loss residents with below \$30K annual salary

66% — HOH individuals needing two devices

71% — Hearing aid purchases without 3rd-party payment



30% — Nebraskans who can't afford hearing aids